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Information Literacy Action Plan

Information literacy has become a crucial component to the education of students in the 21st century. It is the responsibility of the teacher librarian to advocate for the instruction of information literacy throughout the school community. So, what is an accepted definition of Information Literacy? The definition I will work with in this action plan is the American Library Association (1989) definition that states, “To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.”

To begin, I will be a new teacher librarian at K-12 school next year, and I learned through my interview and tour of the school that there are several information literacy needs. First, in the interview I asked if the school had any information problem solving process or information literacy plan. The teachers and principals in the interview looked at each until the high school principal told me that he didn’t know what that was so his answer was no. I explained to them and described the Big6 plan. All in the interview lit up with great interest and were very excited to learn more. This is the first reason that I will implement an information literacy action plan that is designed to inform the staff in the first semester. Second, the junior high and high school teachers shared that the Language Arts classes do not do any kind of research project using the library. There wasn’t any support from the previous librarian to purchase databases or reference materials or any collaboration from the librarian to assist in creation, instruction or evaluation of the projects. This demonstrates a clear hole in the information literacy skills being taught in the school. I will recommend with the return of research projects, that the Big6 be used to structure the projects for the sake of consistency and effectiveness.

Standards will play an important role in the development of introducing the Big6 method. There are a variety of standards that could be used to link the information literacy plan. I will use the Illinois School Library Media Association (ISLMA) created I-SAIL (Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries). I choose these standards because a unique feature of the I-SAIL library standards is they are linked to state and national standards which make it simple to link to standards classroom teachers use. “I-SAIL combines Illinois State Learning Standards, AASL 21st Century Standards and NETS Standards with library standards, objectives and benchmarks” (MY-SAIL). It seems that the Big6 skills match up with the following I-SAIL standards best:

**Standard 1:Accesses information efficiently and effectively to inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge.**

### ****Standard 2:**** Evaluates information critically and competently

### ****Standard 3:**** Uses information accurately, creatively, and ethically to share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society

### ****Standard 5:**** Understands and practices Internet safety when using any social electronic media for educational or leisure purposes (Standards).

As mentioned, these are the standards that I would use as a librarian, then I-SAIL has a template that cross references other state and national standards that I could use to help my collaboration with the teacher. I like the ease of using these standards as well as it makes it easy for me to demonstrate to other teachers and administration the value of using and incorporating the Big6 Problem-solving process.

The action plan is designed to reach all teachers on the informational level, but allow teachers to individually explore the concepts and application of information literacy. In Implementation it is important to make all teachers aware of what information literacy is and what an instructional strategy for information literacy would look like. The plan is to have a series of pamphlets that will be given to faculty and staff in faculty meetings. Each meeting for four months will have a new pamphlet and it will, in essence, be a semester of awareness of information literacy. At each faculty meeting I would give an overview of what the pamphlet contains, and I would give an example of how the information could be used. The goal of this part of the implementation plan is to make teachers like those in my interview who didn’t know anything about information literacy, aware of it. The second element of the action plan is to invite teachers who are interested in learning more about what information literacy is and how they could create inquiry based lessons to the library for a morning coffee and discuss their specific classes. This would be a morning or afternoon meeting with one to three teachers to face to face talk and plan. Some of the key members of the school community who would need to be involved are the teachers (of course), the school administration and me, the librarian. My goal is to find three to five teachers throughout the school who I could work with to create some plans using an information literacy system. The method I intend to introduce to the staff is the Big6 method. Some key members of the school community to make this successful are the building administration and the teachers. First, the building administration would need to be on board, because they would need to put me on the agenda for the faculty meetings. Also, if teachers know that the building administration is in support of the plan, they may feel more comfortable or willing to take part. The teachers would also be an important stake holder in the process. Without teachers willing to take a chance, the action plan will not be successful. My goal would be to get 3-5 teachers interested to learn more and then one or two who are willing to take action right away. Some road blocks might be administration getting too involved and mandating that teachers start using the Big6 method. This would be a roadblock. In my experience any time administration says, “you will do” anything, there is resistance. If teachers willingly get involved and other teachers see the success, it will be much more successful. Another roadblock might be the teachers themselves. If no one sees the value or they just see the time commitment to get involved, they may stay away from trying.

My implementation of the informational plan to the faculty will begin with the September faculty meeting and a pamphlet titled, “What is Information Literacy and the Big6?” The goal of this first pamphlet is to simply inform the faculty of the concepts of Information Literacy and plant the name Big6 and the six steps into their minds. The second pamphlet will come in the October meeting where I will describe the first three steps to the Big6 plan. This will also be where I will invite teachers to the first morning or after school coffee discussion. The third pamphlet will be given out in the November meeting and cover the last three steps of the Big6 and will describe the Super 3 that might be used in the elementary grades. Here I will invite elementary teachers to a separate morning or afternoon coffee discussion in the elementary library as well as I will have a second informal meeting for the 6-12 grades in the high school library. Then my hope will be to present a project example that I have implemented with a teacher at the school using the Big6 information literacy method. If I don’t have a completed project, then I will present a project or application of the Big6 as an example. A modification to this schedule will be to present at smaller department-type meetings.

Works Cited

“I-SAIL Bookmark” I-SAIL: Navigating between Library and Classroom. Web. 25 April 2010.

“Standards.” I-SAIL: Navigating between Library and Classroom. Web. 26 April 2010.